



Physical Activity

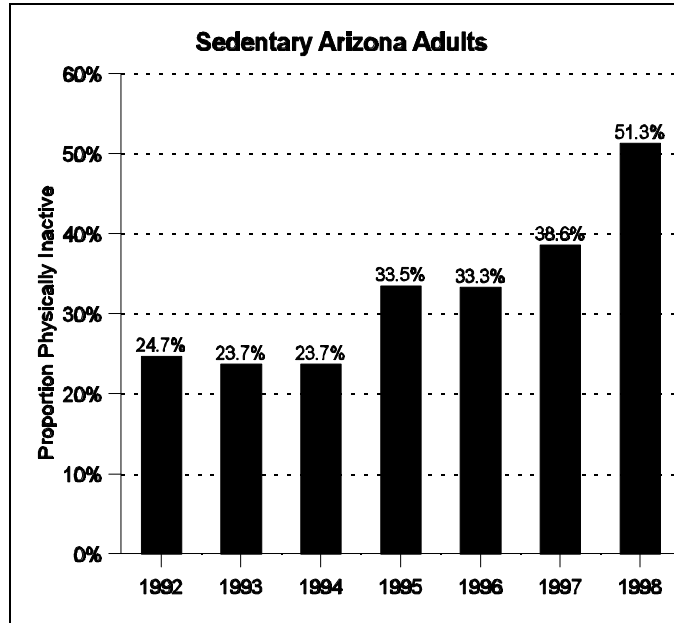
Regular physical activity is associated with lower death rates for adults of any age, even when only moderate levels of physical activity are performed. Regular physical activity decreases the risk of death from heart disease, lowers the risk of developing diabetes, and is associated with a decreased risk of colon cancer. In addition, it helps prevent high blood pressure and helps reduce blood pressure in persons with elevated levels. Regular physical activity also:

- Increases muscle and bone strength.
- Increases lean muscle and helps decrease body fat.
- Aids in weight control and is a key part of any weight loss effort.
- Enhances psychological well-being and has been shown to reduce the risk of developing depression.

In addition, children and adolescents need weight-bearing exercise for normal skeletal development, and young adults need such exercise to achieve and maintain peak bone mass. Older adults can improve and maintain strength and agility with regular physical activity. This can reduce the risk of falling, helping older adults maintain an independent living status. Regular physical activity also increases the ability of people with certain chronic, disabling conditions to perform activities of daily living.

According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS), the percentage of Arizonans who are physically active decreased from 76.3% in 1994 to 48.7% in 1998. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ranked Arizona last among the 50 states for its percentage of adults who reported leisure time physical activity. Low income individuals (<\$10,000/ year) were found to be at greater risk for sedentary lifestyle (45.6%) while those with higher incomes (>\$75,000/year) were at lower risk (16.8%). The Arizona Department of Health Services has declared an epidemic of sedentary lifestyle due to the high numbers of individuals that report no physical activity.

The strategies in this focus area are broken out into several clusters that delineate what can be done in schools, at the worksite, through public awareness, etc., to improve our level of physical activity. Only through a comprehensive commitment to this issue can we decrease the threat of chronic disease in the lives of Arizonans.



Source: BRFSS monthly surveys (state weighted each year, not age standardized).

Objective #1 **Increase the proportion of children who participate in cumulative intermittent physical activity for 60 minutes per day. (Note: Ideally, blocks of activity should be at least 15 minutes.)**

Objective #2 **Increase the proportion of adolescents who engage in either moderate or vigorous physical activity. (Adolescents = ages 12-18, grades 7-12.)**

Youth and adolescents

School Strategies (designations in parentheses are taken from CDC's Guidelines for School and Community Programs Promoting Lifelong Physical Activity)

Strategy 1.1 Require and increase time spent in physical education. (Policy)

Strategy 1.2 Provide funding and equipment to promote physical activity in schools. (Policy)

Strategy 1.3 Emphasize participation in lifetime activity. (Physical Education Curricula and Instruction)

Strategy 1.4	Integrate physical activity into the school day by incorporating physical activity into classes. (Physical Activity Curricula and Instruction)
Strategy 1.5	Require and increase school time, such as recess and regular activity breaks throughout the school day, for unstructured physical activity. (Environment)
Strategy 1.6	Promote safe spaces and facilities for physical activity (including safe routes to increase walking to school and safe after school play places). (Environment)
Strategy 1.7	Provide and promote more after school programs that foster physical activity. (Extracurricular Activities)
Strategy 1.8	Provide and promote intramural programs that offer diverse, developmentally appropriate physical activities, both competitive and noncompetitive. (Extracurricular Activities)
Strategy 1.9	Increase the qualifications of teachers, coaches, recreation, health care staff, and other school personnel to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among children. (Training)

Family Strategies (designations in parentheses are taken from CDC's Guidelines for School and Community Programs Promoting Lifelong Physical Activity)

Strategy 2.1	Increase awareness of the importance of physical activity, available resources, and how to get involved in enjoyable, lifelong physical activity. (All)
Strategy 2.2	Promote family involvement in physical activity. (Family Involvement)
Strategy 2.3	Decrease inactive time at home and in the community. (Family Involvement, Community Programs)

*Community Strategies (designations in parentheses are taken from **CDC's** Guidelines for School and Community Programs Promoting Lifelong Physical Activity)*

Strategy 3.1	Increase awareness of the importance of physical activity, available resources, and how to get involved in enjoyable, lifelong physical activity. (All)
--------------	---

Strategy 3.2	Decrease inactive time at home and in the community. (Family Involvement, Community Programs)
Strategy 3.3	Provide and promote use of a range of developmentally appropriate community sports and recreation programs that are attractive to all young persons. (Community Programs)
Strategy 3.4	Provide and promote use of physical and social environments that encourage and enable young persons to engage in safe and enjoyable physical activity. (Environment)
Strategy 3.5	Promote peer group activities. (Environment, Community Programs)

Adults

Objective #3	Increase the proportion of adults who engage regularly, preferably daily, in moderate or vigorous physical activity.
Objective #4	Reduce the proportion of adults who engage in no physical activity.

Employer/Worksite Strategies

Strategy 1.1	Develop and implement programs that promote physical activity in the workplace.
Strategy 1.2	Increase access to worksite facilities that promote physical activity.
Strategy 1.3	Promote workplace policies and practices that promote physical activity (such as flexible hours, activity breaks, and incentives).
Strategy 1.4	Promote partnerships between employers and health clubs.

Public Awareness

Strategy 2.1	Promote physical activity among adults by increasing public awareness via a media campaign. Promote lifestyle physical activity among older adults by increasing public awareness via a media campaign and use of
--------------	---

newsletters and other sources. Include messages with a common theme that are motivational to older adults and that promote cardiovascular activity as well as activities that build bones and muscle mass.

- Strategy 2.2 Conduct formative research to identify best approaches to different target populations with a goal of making physical activity the norm. Focus on instigating and maintaining involvement in physical activity.

Health Care Providers

- Strategy 3.1 Promote physical activity among adults by working through health care providers.
- Strategy 3.2 Promote physical activity among older adults by working through health care providers (using such strategies as provider education, promulgation of health guidelines that promote physical activity, use of physical activity prescriptions, and financial incentives.)

Community Strategies

- Strategy 4.1 Promote public policies that foster physical activity among adults, including insurance company policies.
- Strategy 4.2 Provide and promote use of community facilities and safe places to foster physical activity among adults and older adults (such as bike trails and walking paths; need to consider lighting, shade, and other safety issues; work with schools, cities, and developers).
- Strategy 4.3 Provide and promote family physical activity. Promote inter-generational approaches to increasing physical activities.
- Strategy 4.4 Schedule community activities that promote physical activity at convenient times.
- Strategy 4.5 Identify and work to reduce/eliminate barriers to participation in physical activity (such as providing child care, offering free/low cost activities, and promoting peer group activities; include socialization opportunities for older adults).
- Strategy 4.6 Establish community coalitions that promote physical activity.

- Strategy 4.7 Provide and promote programs that focus on moderate activity for people who have not been physically active. Include focus on lifestyle activity such as walking, gardening, and housework.
- Strategy 4.8 Conduct formative research to determine effective means for reaching this population.
- Strategy 4.9 Promote peer group support for older adults to foster physical activity. ("Fitness Corps")